

Don Lapre's
MINIMIZE YOUR
RISKS



MAXIMIZE YOUR
PROFITS

The keys to advertising with
little or no money!



This publication provides the Author's opinions and neither the Publisher (New Strategies) nor the author (Don Lapre) intends to render legal, accounting, or other professional advice with this publication.

With regards to licensing of a business enterprise or any other legal, accounting or tax matters, the Publisher and Author strongly suggest that the reader seek the services of appropriate licensed professionals and comply with the local licensing requirements of the community in which the reader resides or conducts business.

The Publisher and author disclaim any personal liability, loss or risk incurred as a consequence of the use and application, either directly or indirectly, of any advice, information, or methods presented in this publication.

First Edition

Copyright 1997
by New Strategies

All rights reserved. No part of this manuscript may be reproduced (by any means) without the expressed written permission of Don Lapre and/or New Strategies.

Table of Contents

ForewordPage iii

IntroductionPage v

Chapter 1
MythsPage 1

Chapter 2
Co-ops Page 7

Chapter 3
Placemats & MenusPage 13

Chapter 4
CalendarsPage 33

Chapter 5
NewslettersPage 35

Chapter 6
Flyers, Bulletin Boards.....Page 41

Chapter 7
Hotels & Motels, Business Cards, EnvelopesPage 45

Chapter 8
Signs, Publicity, Fax MachinesPage 51

Chapter 9
More Ways to Get Paid for Advertising Your BusinessPage 59

Foreword

The purpose of this manual is twofold: 1) To pass along to you the best ideas I have on advertising, for budgets consisting of little or no money; and, 2) to inspire.

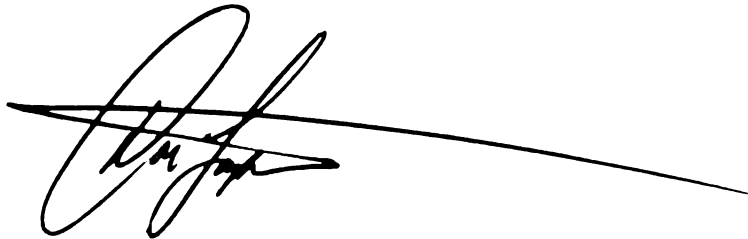
Someone once said that success is 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration. I agree. That 1% inspiration is the spark or the genius, you might say, behind any endeavor. Without it, nothing would ever get done. Dreams would never become reality. In fact, there would be no dreams. While willingness to work hard is crucial to the success of any good plan, without that tiny spark of inspiration there would never be a plan.

I am convinced that inspiration is something that can be turned on, whenever you want, just like you turn on the lamp over your desk. You just need to know how. The key is to feed the mind — through listening, through reading, and through recognizing the possibility of all things. If you want to turn on your own inspiration, you'll need to keep an open mind, listen to others, weed out the negative, and focus on the positive.

Warren Hilton, A.B., L.L.B., author of *The Applications of Psychology to the Problems of Personal and Business Efficiency*, has this to say about success: “. . . success in any practical pursuit is a triumph of consciousness. It is a triumph of consciousness in that it is the realization of your conscious ideals through the mastery of your own forces.”

We've put this manual together so that, through the ideas presented, we might help you to master your own forces, to ignite your own spark of inspiration, and to go on to your own success, whatever you want that to be.

Best wishes,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Lapre', followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line that extends to the right.

Don Lapre

Introduction

A college professor I once met began the first lecture of each new semester with this little-known fact: "According to all the known laws of aerodynamics, the bumblebee cannot fly." We all know, of course, that the bumblebee does fly and, therefore, the only logical conclusion is that either there must be something wrong with the laws of aerodynamics or there must be something missing in our knowledge of aerodynamics. The professor related the story of the bumblebee because he wanted his students to be aware that there is always the possibility that the so-called "experts" don't always have all the answers. I relate it to you for the very same reason. There is no shortage of opinion on what is, and what is not, the best way to advertise. In fact, in researching for this manual, I found nearly 700 books on advertising, and I immediately had this mental picture of a searcher, seeking out "advertising truth" being buried in an avalanche of books—an avalanche of "advertising wisdom." In this picture, the searcher is flattened like a cartoon character run over by a steam roller. Not wiser, just dead, and the death certificate reads, "Died of confusion." Assuming that one had the time to go through nearly 700 books on the subject of advertising, it's really easy to see how the main problem for a seeker of advertising truth would not be the lack of information, but rather the over-abundance of it. It's even easier to see how the "average Joe" could become dismayed. With so much information, it's nearly impossible to weed out the useful from the useless, the good ideas from the bad. Well, just as conventional wisdom regarding flight does not seem to apply to the bumble bee, conventional wisdom does not necessarily apply in the discussion that follows. While reading this book, keep in mind that the ideas presented here are not necessarily in line with what you would read in a textbook on advertising or what you would hear in a class entitled "Marketing 101." The ideas presented here are **SIMPLE—AND THEY CAN WORK! ! !**

"Expert: someone who brings confusion to simplicity."

—John Kendrick Bangs

notes

During the great depression of the 1930's, some tavern owners decided to boost their lunch sales by offering free food to their customers—items such as pretzels, potato chips, salami, peanuts, popcorn, and various other foods. In spite of the depression, business was booming for those owners who elected to provide that free food. At first glance, it might seem that the tavern owners were good-hearted, compassionate fellows. But compassion had nothing to do with it; it was simply a matter of economics. You see, the food items that the tavern owners provided were all salty foods and the owners just raised the price of their drinks a little to cover the cost of the food—food that demanded something to quench the resulting thirst. The moral of this story, some would think, is "there ain't no free lunch," but I see it differently. The moral of this story is that, instead of letting bad times ruin them, these tavern owners turned adversity into opportunity and prospered!

It's important to remember that YOU control your destiny. Let the problems of everyday living take precedence in your thinking, and you'll suffer for it. But, if you live each day counting your blessings and doing what needs to be done, you'll find that any problems you have will melt away like a spring snow. Remember this—the only difference between the successful person and the unsuccessful person is that the successful person goes ahead and does what the rest of the crowd just talks about.

I recently read *The Greatest Secret in the World* by Og Mandino, who also authored *The Greatest Salesman in the World*. I opened the cover and started reading the inside flap which says, in essence, that the author never expected *The Greatest Salesman in the World* to become the international best-seller it did indeed become. Through "word of mouth advertising," hundreds of thousands of copies have been sold all over the world. "This book," I thought "will be a good one," and I read on. Chapter 1, page 11, fifth line: "The money spent on this book has been wasted." "What? What a way to begin a book," I thought. Well, it got my attention. I remember a high school speech teacher once telling me that, in order

to interest the listener (or the reader), I needed a really dynamite attention-getter. Well, even though I hadn't actually spent any money for this book (I'd borrowed it from the library), the author got my attention and I certainly wanted to find out just why I would have wasted my money had I indeed forked over the price of the book. As I read on, the author talked about broken New Year's resolutions, procrastination, phony desire, and generally all the reasons he believes that those who purchase his book will have wasted their money. The bottom line is simply this—he believes that most people who read his book, or this book (or any manual that offers information on how to improve one's lot) will do little if anything with that information. They will not commit themselves to their own self-improvement. The reasons for his skepticism are many, but it really matters not what they are. I'm not as skeptical about human nature as Og Mandino. I know that there are those who will do nothing to improve their lot in life. But with this venture, as with any that I become involved in, I begin with the assumption that you want to be one of the few who commits soul, body and mind to your own success. If that were not the case, you certainly would not have purchased this book. It's true, there is no end to the line of people who are waiting for their ship to come in but who are not willing to do what it takes to navigate that ship into port. I have great faith in you. I believe you won't wait for your ship to come in—you'll swim out to it.

Were I to follow in the footsteps of Og Mandino, I would tell you that the information provided on the pages that follow is worth nothing, because you won't commit, etc., etc., etc.—but as I've already pointed out, I don't believe that. I happen to have tremendous faith in the ability of people to reach great heights. Realistically, I know that if I were to give some people a treasure map they would want to find the treasure without ever digging—as others would want to win the lottery without buying a ticket or inherit a fortune from along-lost uncle. Or, simply stated, get rich without doing anything at all. If I were to believe that most people were like that, I wouldn't have written this book. I am motivated to produce a book such as this by the belief that given an opportunity and simple,

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

—Eleanor Roosevelt

notes

straightforward directions, most people can and will succeed.

No, there is no magic formula, no fountain of youth, no genie in the bottle ready to grant your every wish. But there is always opportunity and what is important is what you are willing to do with it. You've heard the phrase "Opportunity knocks but once." Don't believe it! Opportunity is around every corner, in every nook and cranny, and all you need to do in order to tap into it is to see it. How do you see opportunity? By keeping your mind on the positive. By counting your blessings. By believing in the possibility of all things and in the possibility of your own success. When life seems determined to knock you down and keep you down—don't let it. If you find yourself feeling that things just couldn't get worse, remember that as bad off as you may be, you need only to look to your left or to your right and you'll see many others who are much worse off than you. A positive attitude sees opportunity everywhere. A negative attitude sees only adversity and is blind to opportunity. If you really want success, you will need not only to commit yourself to that goal, but you'll need to keep a positive frame of mind.

When you first tried riding a bicycle and you couldn't get your balance, you didn't give up—you kept trying. When you first tried to roller-skate, or ice-skate, you fell down a few times starting out, but you got right back up and tried again and again until you could keep up with the rest of the skaters. When you first got behind the wheel of a car, you may have been trembling with fright, but you didn't quit. You kept at it until you could pass the driver's test and get that license you wanted more than anything else in the world. When you were very young, you didn't give up. You kept on trying. When you were young, you were very persistent. When others told you that you just couldn't do something, you most likely set out to prove them wrong. As people get older, they sometimes forget that they're capable of accomplishing anything they put their mind to. Children already know that. Children do not know that failing at something is a reason to give up. They have to be taught, and they often are in very subtle ways. We are a nation that emphasizes winning and, if we should

lose, some of us just don't seem able to let go and start winning again. One loss does not a failure make. Failing at something is not something to be ashamed of. It is not a sin, nor is it an indicator of one's abilities or lack thereof. Failure is nothing more than proof of one's attempt to achieve and nothing to be ashamed of. For me at least, sin would be the failure to pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and try all over again. I did not become wealthy without trying—and failing—at many things. Had I quit with the first setback, I would never have enjoyed the success that I do today.

There is an old saying that "Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents which, in prosperous circumstances, would have lain dormant." In other words, sometimes we need to stumble in order to bring out the very best in us. Our successes do not necessarily teach us anything. Success pats us on the back, saying "Good job!" We all need to succeed, but we don't need to be devastated when we stumble. When we stumble, we're learning. If you just remember that, you'll never be crushed by a momentary defeat. Remember that everyone's potential is limited only by what they believe their limitations to be. You can achieve anything! You can be whatever you want to be and the only person who can stop you is you!

One more thing. I've said this many times before but it bears repeating. Don't tell others of your plans for success! Just do it! When you tell others, you're running the risk of talking your plans into oblivion. Others will be skeptical for a thousand different reasons. Sometimes it will be simple jealousy. But whatever the reason, they will almost never be as enthusiastic about your future as you are, and their lack of enthusiasm alone may be enough to kill your desire to pursue what may have been a fantastic opportunity. You've seen the commercial that says "Just do it!" After you've made your fortune, you'll have plenty of time to talk about it, but you'll probably be too busy having fun.

A few years ago in a television interview, Ted Turner was asked to what he attributed his success. He replied that he lived by a philosophy of "Early to bed, early to rise, work

"Man is as full of potential as he is of impotence."

—George Santayana

notes

like hell and advertise!" In order to be financially successful, I don't believe you need to kill yourself working. I believe in working smart as opposed to working hard and the difference is often just a matter of being informed. After all, isn't that why you bought this book? You wanted to learn how you could advertise on a very small or nonexistent budget. You decided to go to the source, to someone who had done just that. Now that's what I call "working smart."

Now advertising is necessary to the success of any business. There's no doubt about that. "Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark—You know what you are doing but nobody else does." The problem with advertising is that, with all the information that's out there, it's easy for the layperson to come to the conclusion that what is the most effective way to advertise is not for the average man on the street to understand. It is better left to the professionals. Well, don't believe it. That's a myth. I never had one minute of training in advertising (or marketing) and I have successfully marketed several products. How? By placing tiny classified ads in the newspaper. Sound too simple? Sometimes the solution to a problem is very simple and you shouldn't let the simplicity of a thing turn you off. Remember the hula hoop, a round plastic ring that became popular in the 1950's? Did you know that to this day there are still millions of hula hoops sold annually? A round plastic ring—you can't get much simpler than that. How about the pet rock? How would you have responded if a friend told you he was going to sell pet rocks? How would you like to have one-tenth of one cent for every paper clip sold? These things are so simple that most of us would never have thought of them. Search your memory for a moment, haven't you seen something advertised on television and found yourself thinking "That's so simple, why didn't I think of that?" The first and foremost rule you should apply to your advertising is "keep it simple." You've probably heard someone talking about the KISS method. Translation. Keep It Simple Stupid. I call it working smart, not hard. The best way to ensure that you'll work "smart" and not hard is to keep things simple and don't overlook something just because it seems too simple.

The ideas presented here are simple. Anyone can apply them to their own advertising needs. The best part is that you don't have to know anything about advertising. These methods have worked for others and they could work for you.

notes

"Man's mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions."

—Oliver Wendel Holmes

the **Myths**

Myth #1

**Advertising is very expensive.
No way around it.**

This simply isn't so. We'll present, in the pages that follow, several different ways that you can advertise for free or for very little money. As far as I am concerned, the only advertising that costs is advertising that doesn't accomplish its goal—to instill in the would-be customer the desire to purchase your product or utilize your service. If a piece of advertising accomplishes that, then it pays for itself; and, because the cost of advertising is built into the product, it could easily be said that a successful advertising campaign costs nothing at all.

Not only will I share with you my secrets for advertising with little or no money, but whenever possible I'll share my secrets on how to advertise successfully.

Myth #2

Television advertising is the only way to go.

Television is a very powerful advertising medium, but that single fact shouldn't be the primary reason you would choose television as your chief mode of advertising. Neither should you choose television because a sales representative tells you, "We have a special going on right now." I hear that a lot. The fact is, just like supermarkets and department stores, television (and radio) stations have specials all the time. If you really feel that sales of your service or product would benefit most from television advertising, then you should look into it. However, before you make that decision, you should investigate all other

means of promoting your product. Even when you buy media time "on sale", the money you spend, if you could have promoted your business with the same success in another medium, is money wasted.

If you have a classified ad running in your local paper and, after a week or so, you discover the ad just isn't working, you can cancel the ad, change the wording, and run it again. If your television spot isn't working, you'll find that it isn't so easy to change, and doing so could cost hundreds and sometimes thousands of dollars.

Myth #3

Good advertising is short and to the point.

Not necessarily so. There is an advertising term "white space" that you will hear kicked around a lot where you spend any time around advertising professionals. The term refers to providing lots of white space in an ad, especially around the most central message of the ad. The theory is that if you surround the central message with lots of text, it will be lost. Whereas, if you surround the same message with white space, it will stand out and your message will be seen and hopefully acted upon. One of the first things most people learn in preparing advertising copy is the use of white space: "Make the message brief and surround it with white space. Don't clutter it up, clean it up and, don't forget, use lots and lots of white space."

Those hard core, dyed-in-the-wool white space advocates might be among those who would tell you that lengthy advertising (ie. wordy advertising) just doesn't work. Herman Holtz, whose book *Great Promo Pieces* debunks many of the common attitudes towards advertising, has this to say about white space: "One of the most pernicious (myths) is the notion that prospects will not read copy that

"Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap; it will be dear (costly) to you."

—Thomas Jefferson

notes

does not have a great deal of white space and a text layout that appears to be easy to read. The fact is that many highly successful advertisements were all large bodies of text set solid. The simple fact is that prospects will read any copy that captures and holds their interest. And, of course, they won't read copy that does not interest them, no matter how much white space you provide or how easy to read the copy appears to be."

You know those letters you get every now and then that start out something like this: "Dear Mr. Smith, You may already have won ten million dollars." Have you ever wondered why those letters were so lengthy? Haven't you wished they'd just get to the point. Do you know why they don't?

Well, it seems that one of these companies commissioned a study and, on the basis of that study, determined that the longer the letter, the more likely it was that the recipient would purchase whatever it was they (the company) were selling. The objective then is to keep the reader's attention for as long as possible, because the longer they read, the more likely they are to buy.

In some instances, lots of white space may be exactly what's needed, but the claim that lots of white space and very few words are a "must" simply doesn't hold water. Remember the words of Herman Holtz— "prospects will read any copy that captures and holds their interest . . . and they won't read copy that doesn't."

Myth #4

The only way to know that your advertising is going to be effective is if you engage the services of an advertising agency.

Not necessarily so. If you can afford the services of an agency, fine; but you don't have to use an agency. I didn't when I started out. I might have, but I didn't have any money. I'd lost everything but my job painting houses. I had a wife, and was supporting two people. So the money I had to put into advertising was next to nothing. I had to devise a better plan. That plan was the same plan I still use today: place a small ad—one that doesn't cost much—just to see if there is any response. If there is and the ad pays for itself, I run the ad again. Once an ad makes a profit, even a small one, I place the ad in two papers instead of one. As the profit grows, I just keep placing the ad in more and more papers.

Because I take a cautious approach, I'm not wiped out financially if an ad doesn't bring a response. I just keep placing small ads as my budget allows and, when an ad does take off and brings in that big response I'm looking for, I blast it out in as many papers as I have time to deal with.

Today, I spend a considerable amount of money on advertising, but that hasn't always been the story. I started out unhappy about my financial condition and was determined to do something about it. I had little more than enough to pay the bills and put food on the table. My situation forced me to come up with inexpensive and creative ways to advertise. After I've shared them with you in the pages that follow, you'll be amazed at just how easy it is.

notes

"Doing business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark: You know what you are doing but no-body else does."

—Ed Howe

Myth #5

Advertising costs money. Plain and simple. If you don't have money, you can't advertise.

Herein lies the purpose for this book. You don't need a lot of money to advertise, and you often don't need any money at all. What you need to succeed is determination. If you have that, we'll show you how you can advertise for little or no money.

Remember: "...he only advertising that costs is advertising that doesn't accomplish its goal of instilling in the would-be customer the desire to purchase your product or utilize your service."

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself."

—Emerson

About

co-ops

The first of many ways to advertise for little or no money is through joining a co-op. Co-op's are nothing new. They've been around for a long time—as long as I can remember, as long as my father can remember, and probably as long as his father can remember. Many people, when they hear of a co-op, automatically think of a farmers' co-op and without good reason—farmers co-op's are possibly the oldest form of co-op's. Another word for co-op is "cooperative." A cooperative is nothing more than a group of people who have joined hands in a common effort. Farmers may form a cooperative in order to buy the necessary feed for their livestock at a lower price because, as a cooperative, they can buy in bulk. Some cooperatives have been formed with just one purpose: to save money. In fact, however, they have resulted in producing profits for their members. I remember reading about a group who created a cooperative with the express purpose of saving money on gas. This was several years back when people were waiting in long lines to buy gas and gas prices were going through the roof. They not only saved money on gas, but decided to sell gas to non-members. They made a profit that was shared by all members. Today, there are cooperatives that you and I frequent every day, but they're not called cooperatives and we don't think of them as cooperatives—places such as PACE, Price Club, Good Sam, Wal-Mart and Home Depot. These cooperatives buy in bulk so they can sell at very competitive prices. Some of these cooperatives require buyers to become members, others do not. And, while members don't always get a share of the profits generated by the cooperative, they nonetheless benefit by the purchasing power of the cooperative. In fact, these types of cooperatives would seem to be the trend for some time to come.

Another modern-day cooperative that has seen some success takes the form of "barter" clubs or associations. A small membership fee is sometimes assessed (often, if you're short of cash, the association will even allow you to use barter dollars to pay the membership fee). The membership is comprised of business people, each having a product or service to offer in exchange for services or products they need. When one member performs a

service for another member or sells another member a product, instead of exchanging cash, the purchasing member produces a membership card (similar to a credit card) and the selling member creates a sales slip, just as if he had been given cash or a credit card. The only difference is that no real money is exchanged. The buyer pays with credits earned from other members through the sale of his or her service or product. The sales slip that is produced goes to the association headquarters where the buyer's credits are transferred to the seller's account. In addition to the membership fee, a small fee is assessed in order to pay the salaries of the administrative staff. In every other way, the sale is no different than any other sale that takes place in any business. The credits one earns and spends are recorded on statements similar to a checking account statement. Just like your bank, at the end of the month the association will send you a statement showing all your sales and purchases.

The great thing about barter associations is that, for a new business operating on a tight budget, membership in the association will usually bring in new customers very quickly and without having to do any advertising.

Not all sales will be strictly for barter. Some of your barter club customers will sometimes want to pay cash and others will pay partly with barter dollars and partly with cash.

Most associations will publish a newsletter that lists among other things, new members and classifieds ads. You'd be amazed at what you can barter for. I've seen classifieds in a barter club's newsletter with everything for sale, including houses, automobiles, boats, office equipment, and almost anything you can think of. In fact, the only thing I haven't seen offered through a barter association is groceries. However, for those who like to dine out, barter clubs usually have several restaurant members. I've even seen dentists offering a full range of dental care through barter associations.

As a new member, you may want to give your business some fast exposure. Some associations will mail out fliers

*"In the middle of
difficulty lies
opportunity."*

—Albert Einstein

"When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years."

—Mark Twain

for you, at no charge, with their newsletter. The only thing you'll need to do is supply the fliers. As a new member, you may want to take advantage of this. Unless you're looking to jump-start your business, however, it usually isn't necessary. Other members who are looking for the products or services you provide will be referred to you by the staff at the association's headquarters. It's possible that, if you do join one of these associations, your business may be the only one of its kind in the association. If that is the case, you can expect to get a lot of customers quickly.

A barter club, is probably the number one way for you to advertise your business free of charge or, at the very most, for a small, one-time membership fee. Once you've signed up, unless you want to send out fliers, you probably won't have to do another thing to advertise your business.

How do you find a cooperative? It's pretty easy. Sometimes they will find you. If you have a new business and there is a co-op in your community, there is a good chance they'll eventually send a recruiter your way. If you don't want to wait for them to contact you, here are some ways you can track them down.

- **Check the Yellow Pages of your phone book.**
- **Check with your local Better Business Bureau or with the Chamber of Commerce. Cooperatives often join the Chamber of Commerce because membership gives them legitimacy and access to a list of Chamber members—candidates for membership in the co-op.**
- **Search the reference section of your local library**

One final word on barter. Whether you barter through an organization or on your own, you should always get the agreement in writing to protect your interests.

Placemats and

Another way to get free advertising is by providing paper placemats to restaurants. The great thing about this is that you can get free advertising for your business and it's an excellent way to bring in extra cash for yourself.

The next time you go out to your favorite eating spot, take a look at those paper (throw-away) placemats they use. If you don't see them at your favorite restaurant, no doubt you've seen them at others. Some restaurants provide patrons with crayons so that, while they wait for their food to arrive, they can doodle or play different games that have been printed on the placemats. One might assume that the crayons and games are provided for the kiddies. However, I've been to restaurants where, at lunchtime, it's not at all unusual to see a dining room full of adults playing "hangman," connecting the dots, or just doodling. Some restaurants use paper placemats to advertise their own business. If you've ever eaten at a McDonald's, you may have noticed that, on their placemats, they've had everything from advertisements for their latest variation on the hamburger to information on how to "join the team at McDonald's."

In any event, there are people who earn a good living providing those placemats to restaurants—free of charge. They do this by selling advertising space on the placemats to local businesses. This is something you can do, too. In fact, I'll show you how to do this step-by-step and you'll see just how easy it is. If you enjoy selling, this will be perfect for you. If you hate selling, don't worry. At the end of this section, I'll tell you how you can do this so that you won't ever have to sell a thing.

First, here's a list of what you'll have to do. I'll explain each step in detail following the list.

- 1. Make a list of local restaurants.**
- 2. Call the restaurants on your list.**
- 3. Find a printer.**
- 4. Sell ads.**
- 5. Print and deliver placemats.**

1 Prepare a list of local restaurants.

Set aside some time and make a list of restaurants in your area that you frequent or that you believe would want free placemats. You may want to eliminate national chains, since most of them will have their placemats provided by their central suppliers.

Creating such a list is simple—just go to the Yellow Pages of your phone book and, as the ad goes, “let your fingers do the walking.”

Another way of obtaining names for your list is to check out the legal notices in your local newspaper. There should be a list of new businesses applying for occupational licenses. Some cities require new businesses to advertise their intent to open shop. If the ads do not show the address and/or telephone number of the business, you should be able to get that information from the telephone company or from the licensing arm of your local government. Obtaining names in this manner can be an ongoing project and an excellent way to gain new business, especially if you have a service business or are a supplier of business products.

notes

“A man without a smiling face must not open a shop.”

—Chinese proverb

A third way to obtain a list of local restaurants is through your local Chamber of Commerce. Some Chambers will provide you with a free listing of all businesses in the community, while others may charge a small fee. If your business is new, it's probably a good idea to call on your local Chamber anyway. Depending on the size of the city and the corresponding size of the Chamber's budget, you may be able to obtain all kinds of valuable information from them. If there is a cost, it's usually nominal.

#2 **Call the restaurants on your list.**

This won't take very much time and you're not going to want to call all the restaurants at one time anyway. You're just looking to make an appointment to talk with one or two owners (or managers).

Here are some pointers that will help:

- **When you call, you should ask to speak with the individual responsible for purchasing supplies. Depending on what type of operation it is, that person may be the owner, the general manager, or the kitchen manager.**
- **It's probably best to call a good two to three hours before the lunch rush. Most managers will be dealing with purchasing and similar tasks about this time. Once the restaurant is open, the managers may be too busy attending to more immediate matters and not have time to talk with you.**
- **When you get through to the person who is responsible for purchasing, you should briefly introduce yourself as a supplier of restaurant (disposable) placemats and ask if he or she would be interested in obtaining placemats for their restaurant—free of charge.**

Let's assume for a moment that you're so busy you just don't have the time it would take to call the restaurants on your list. Now that's a bit difficult to imagine because, once you've found one or two owners who are interested in getting free placemats from you, there's no need to place any more calls. It's really difficult to believe that you'll have to make very many calls before someone will say, "Yes! You bet I'm interested." But, if you don't want to call the restaurants on your list—regardless of the reason —no problem! There is another way for you to accomplish your mission: by mailing out postcards.

There are several advantages to mailing out postcards. They're inexpensive. At approximately 19¢ each, you can reach 100 restaurants for under \$20.00. Also, the time involved in mailing postcards out will be considerably less than the time it would take to make all those phone calls. Also, you won't be constrained by your schedule or by theirs.

A postcard mailing is, in essence, playing the numbers game. Direct mail accounts for billions of dollars in commerce annually. Those companies who engage in direct mail know that for every mailing, they can be absolutely certain that a predictable number of those receiving the mailing will respond. The idea here is just to get a two to three percent response. Remember, out of a hundred restaurants, you only need one or two to say yes.

You can hand-write the cards if you like and if you have the time. I believe that a handwritten card will elicit a better response, because it's seen as a personal piece of mail rather than "junk" mail. If your handwriting is really bad, you might want to have a friend or family member write the cards for you.

notes

Here is what you will want the card to say:

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to you to inquire if you would be interested in allowing me to supply free placemats for your restaurant. If so, please call me at (your phone number) so I can take your order.

This offer is absolutely free to you—the placemats are paid for by local business owners.

I'll be looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Don't wait too long, as this offer is limited!

Sincerely,

(your name)

There is yet another advantage to doing a mailing. When you do get a call, you'll be getting calls from people who are already interested in your offer, thus eliminating the necessity of selling them on the idea. All you'll need to do is set up an appointment to take their order.

#3 Find a printer.

If you've had a good deal of experience with printers, you might want to skip this section and go on to the next. There's nothing complicated about finding a printer. All you need to do is go to the Yellow Pages and make a few phone calls. If you live in a big city, you'll find many listings for printers in the Yellow Pages, sometimes, several pages of them. It's not necessary to call all those printers, because you're just looking for one that can handle a high-volume print job. Most of the quick print shops won't be able to give you a competitive price. Generally, their costs are much higher than with shops that print in volume. This shouldn't stop you from comparing prices—high volume shop vs. quick print shop—because you just might find the quick print shop that's hungry for business and will cut you a really good deal.

Before you go looking for a printer, you might want to get a sample placemat to show. Some printers will give you a quote over the phone, provided you are able to tell them what type of paper you want, how many copies, how many colors, etc. However, some will want a sample before giving you a quote. If you don't know anything about paper grades, you'll definitely want to have something to show the printer. Getting a sample is easy enough. All you need to do is to treat yourself to dinner tonight and, when you're done, take one of the placemats with you. You could even pick one up at a nearby fast-food restaurant.

"The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will."

—Vincent T. Lombardi

Printers deal in specifics and here are some of the things they'll want to know:

- **Weight and type of paper.** If you have a sample, you won't need to worry about knowing paper weight and type. Any printer will be able to tell from the sample.
- **How many colors the job will require.** Adding color to a printing job can add considerable cost. So, other than black, you'll probably want to keep it to as few colors as possible. Also, each additional color adds time to finish the job, since each color is printed individually and the printer will need time for one color to dry before running the next.

If you do want to use color, keep in mind that there are thousands of colors available and each primary color has many variations. So, if color is crucial, you may want to ask the printer to show you a Pantone® color chart so that there will be no surprises when the job is done. Most printers will show you color samples anyway, since they don't want to be surprised either.

- **How many copies will you need?** You'll probably be ordering in quantities of about 10,000 or more. When you ask for a quote, remember that price per piece goes down as total number of pieces increases. You might want to ask for quotes on three quantities: 10,000, 20,000, and 30,000. How many you'll actually need will, of course, be determined by the restaurants you'll be supplying.
- **Deposits.** Sometimes a printer will want a deposit simply because they don't know you. Later on, after you've established a good relationship, most printers will allow you to pay when you pick up the work.

- **Errors.** The fact is, most errors are not a result of printing. Most errors happen during the typesetting and any printer worth his salt will require that you proofread the typesetting prior to printing. Once you've done so, you'll be held responsible for any errors you failed to find. Therefore, you should take the typesetting home and go through it several times before you give the printer the go-ahead.

Keep in mind that not all printers do typesetting. I would suggest that, if at all possible, you find one who does. In the long run, you'll probably spend less with a printer that does in-house typesetting. With the advent of "desk-top publishing," more and more printers are providing their customers with typesetting and graphic design services.

Important—

Be sure to get several quotes. If you take the time to shop around, you'll find that prices can vary dramatically. The time you spend to compare prices can result in savings of several hundreds or even thousands of dollars. Also, get your quotes in writing. Most printers will automatically give you a written quote but, if they don't, ask for one. Print shops are very busy places and you can't expect a printer to remember today's quote two or three weeks down the road. One final point: when you get a quote, ask the printer how long the quote is good for. You'll find that they'll probably give you a quote good for at least 30 days.

*"Opportunity...
Often it comes
disguised in the form
of misfortune, or
temporary defeat."*

—Napoleon Hill

#4 Sell ads.

Once you've found one or two restaurants to supply, the next step is to get your advertisers.

One way is to sell the ads yourself. If you're someone who likes to meet new people, this will not only give you the opportunity to do that but, while you're out getting orders, you'll also be making valuable business contacts. In fact, even if a prospective advertiser doesn't give you an order, the contact alone might prove to be more valuable than you could ever imagine. Many a successful business person will tell you that "networking" is one of the most powerful ways to advance your career or promote your business.

Still, some people have a deep and abiding fear of selling. In some instances, the very thought of selling is enough to make an otherwise strong person tremble. The fact is, there is absolutely nothing to fear. After all, what's the worst thing that can happen when you're out selling? Someone will say "no." Most of selling is just talking to people about a product or service and asking them to buy. However, if you're one of those people who dreads selling, then you're going to want to have someone else sell the ads for you. We'll discuss how you can do that later on.

Whether you sell the ads or someone else does, you're going to need to determine the cost of an ad. You'll also want to develop an approach or sales routine. First, here's how you'll arrive at your cost for an ad.

Arriving at a cost per ad is simple. Just divide the total cost of printing by the number of ads that will be on the mats. For example, if you print 10,000 placemats at a total cost of \$500 and you have room for 20 ads on the mat, then divide the cost by the number of ads. In this example, you will find that, in order to break even, you would have to charge \$25 per ad.

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{Number of ads available} \quad \text{Cost per ad} \\
 \quad \quad \quad \text{\$25} \\
 \hline
 \text{20} \quad \text{\$500} \\
 \quad \quad \quad \text{Total cost of printing}
 \end{array}$$

What you sell the individual ads for is entirely up to you. If you want to make money, then you can charge whatever the market will bear. Often, the only way to determine that is to try selling the ads. If, for example, you were to ask for \$100 per ad and you just couldn't sell any ads at that cost, then you might want to try selling each ad at \$75 or even \$50.

Conversely, if the ads don't sell for \$100, you may want to try selling them for \$200. There has long been the theory that the more something costs, the more valuable it will be perceived to be. There would seem to be a good deal of truth in that. I remember, a few years back, overhearing two young boys bragging to each other about what they'd gotten for Christmas. What struck me about the conversation was that, instead of describing their gifts in terms of what they had gotten, they were describing their gifts in terms of how much they cost. It was very obvious to a casual listener that one boy was very proud of the fact that his gift had cost. I never did hear what they had gotten, only how much their gifts had cost.

If you're a smoker, or were a smoker at one time, you may have signed up for a smoking cessation program offered by one of several private organizations. One such organization, headquartered in California, charged \$600 for a one-week, one hour per day program and they had no problem signing people up. In fact, they had very few hours throughout the week that weren't booked. Your local heart and lung associations offer their own programs, free of charge, and the attendance at their programs is rather small by comparison. Why? Partly because the organization with the \$600 program did a lot of advertising and the heart and lung associations do not.

"A life spent in making mistakes is not only more honorable but more useful than a life spent doing nothing."

—George Bernard Shaw

notes

Knowing human nature, I would put my money on the fact that the \$600 program was perceived to be the one that would work, simply because it cost so much. The bottom line is this: sometimes a thing will sell better just because it costs more. You should take that into consideration when contemplating what you'll charge.

Also, consider this. If you have 20 ads, and you need to sell them at \$25 each to break even, you're going to have to make 20 sales. Now if you need \$25 per ad to break even and, instead of selling each ad for \$25, you sell each one for \$50, now you'll only need to sell 10 ads to break even. It's easy to conclude then, that if you can sell ten ads at \$50 each, you could probably sell 20 ads at \$50 each. Instead of just breaking even, you'll end up with the extra cash in your pocket.

If all you want from selling the ads is to be able to advertise your own business at no cost, then you'll need to remember to keep one of the advertising spaces open for yourself. Also, when you're deciding on what to charge, you'll want to add any costs you may incur, (such as gas, telephone, your time, etc.) to the total cost of printing before you do your calculations. Don't forget to ask the printer to take an ad. Printers have to advertise, too, and it's not uncommon for a printer to trade (or barter) printing for advertising.

Once you've determined the cost per ad, the next step is to devise a sales strategy, one that will address the following:

- **Potential Advertisers**
- **Sale Methods**
- **Selling Points**
- **Overcoming Objections**

Potential Advertisers

Every business within a few miles is a prospective advertiser. However, you might want to start by contacting those businesses closest to the restaurant you'll be giving the placemats to. In fact, when you're canvassing restaurants for the placemats, you might want to start with the ones closest to your business or closest to your home, if you have a home-based business. That way, you'll be dealing with business neighbors. The fact that you are a neighbor can put a prospective advertiser at ease, making it that much easier to sell an ad.

On the next page, you'll find a list of potential advertisers. Those marked with a check mark (✓) are businesses that typically do a lot of coupon advertising and would, therefore, be your hottest prospects. Don't ignore those marked with a bullet (•), however. These are companies that don't normally do a lot of coupon business but would definitely benefit by doing so.

notes

*"That which cost
little is less valued."*
—Cervantes

notes

- Appliance Sales & Repair Outlets
- Auto Repair Shops
- Bars & Nightclubs
- Beauty Salons
- Bail Bonds Services
- Bottled Water Suppliers
- Bowling Lanes
- Carpet Cleaners
- Caterers
- Day-Care Services
- Dry Cleaners
- Comic Book Stores
- Computer Sales & Service Stores
- Air Conditioner Sales & Service Companies
- Cruise & Travel Agents
- Dating Services
- Delivery Services
- Dentists
- Desktop Publishers
- Door & Window Sales
- Employment Agencies
- Copy/Printing Services
- Florists
- Furniture Stores
- Hair Stylists
- Health & Fitness Clubs
- Hotels & Motels
- Janitorial Services
- Jewelers
- Karate/Self Defense Studios
- Lawn Care/Landscapers
- Limo Services
- Locksmiths
- Messenger Services
- Mobile Home Repair Services
- Mortgage Brokers
- Movers
- Optical & Vision Centers

- Packaging & Mail Services
- Paging Services
- Pest Control Services
- Pet Supply Stores
- Photography Studios
- Chiropractors
- Pizza Stores
- Plumbers
- Printers
- Real Estate Agents
- Equipment Rental Stores
- Restaurants
- Roofing Companies
- Storage Companies
- TV & VCR Repair Shops
- Tire Dealers
- Transmission Specialists
- Upholsterers
- Used Automobile Dealers
- Veterinarians
- Video Rental Stores

As you can see, the list of potential advertisers is quite lengthy and it is by no means all-inclusive. An excellent source for more prospects is the Yellow Pages.

notes

"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself—nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

—Franklin D. Roosevelt

There are several methods for selling the ads and which one is best for you will depend on which fits your schedule and/or personality. If you're one of those people who loves selling, then you'll probably want to call on prospective advertisers personally. A personal call gives you the advantage of putting a face to the voice, of being able to read a prospective buyer's facial expressions and body language, and of seeing what's going on while you're talking. Calling on a prospective advertiser in person allows you several advantages.

There are also inherent advantages in conducting business by telephone—the most obvious being the time saved. Also, some people simply prefer selling by telephone. If you're a real upbeat person with a smile that people on the opposite end of the line can sense, then this may be the best way for you to round up advertisers.

Another way to sell the ads is by direct mail. Obviously there will be some cost involved but even if you use first class mail the cost is nominal, and one fact is indisputable: the price of a stamp is still one of the best bargains around. Also, if you've got a flair for writing or for creating a good sales letter, direct mail is a great way to deliver your message. Tip: One of the simplest ways to insure that your letter will be read is by hand addressing the envelope. Think about it for a moment. When you get mail, don't you open those envelopes that have a hand-written address before opening the bills?

Selling Points

Selling is one of the easiest things there is to do, especially if what you're selling is something that a potential customer needs.

Each and every business needs to advertise in some way and that makes your job really easy. In order to sell advertising space on a restaurant placemat, you need only do two things: 1) find a business that needs to advertise (we've already determined that all businesses need to advertise); and 2) point out the advantages of advertising with you.

Here are some sales pitches you might want to use:

- **10,000* people will see your ad.**
- **Typically, when waiting for something, people read.**

*This number will, of course, depend on how many placemats you have printed.

Waiting rooms of all kinds, such as doctors' and dentists' offices, automobile repair shops, hair salons, hospital emergency rooms—any place where people have to wait for more than 15 minutes—usually provide something to read while waiting. When people have to wait, they'll usually read anything at all. In a waiting room situation, it's not unusual to see men reading magazines they would never read under normal circumstances, such as magazines like Ladies Home Journal or Better Homes & Gardens. Sometimes, at the breakfast table, haven't you read the back of the box of cereal because there was nothing else to read? While people are waiting for their meal, they'll probably be reading your ad, because restaurants don't provide magazines.

- Cost is extremely competitive. Because there is no mailing cost and because you are not an advertising agency looking to make a profit, costs are lower.
- Remember: advertising is tax deductible. This might seem obvious, but you'd be surprised how many sales you can make by reminding people about things they should already know.

notes

"Failure is success if we learn from it."

—Malcomb S. Forbes

Well, you get the picture. No doubt, you can come up with some selling points of your own. Hint: if you solicit advertising from businesses close to your own business, not only do you want to ask for their business card, but you should also leave them one of yours. Leaving a business card is a great way to advertise. I'll go into that in more detail later on in this manual.

Overcoming Objections

Anyone who has ever sold for a living is familiar with overcoming objections. In fact, it's one of the first things every salesperson learns. The concept is very simple and anyone can learn how to overcome objections with relative ease. An objection is exactly what you would think it is. You explain the benefits of buying space on your placemats and the prospective advertiser says "no thank you." The reason he or she gives when you ask "may I ask why?" is the objection. If you ask "why not?" and you get an answer like "I just can't afford it at this time," then you've got an objection to overcome. An objection is nothing more than the reason one gives for not purchasing something. Any experienced salesperson will tell you that as long as the customer gives you a reason, a sale is not out of the picture. You just need to overcome that objection. After you've sold a few ads, you'll find that the objections you get will all be very similar, even though they come from many different sources. With that knowledge, you can develop a list of your own responses. Here are a few examples to get you on the right track.

Objection

I can't afford it right now.

Responses

1. I don't need full payment now. A deposit of (amount) will guarantee you a spot.
2. You can't afford not to advertise and this will give you lots of exposure for very little cost.

Objection

Business has fallen off. I just don't feel I should spend now.

Responses

1. The best way to get customers is to advertise and, with this type of advertising, you'll be seen by 10,000 potential customers at a cost far below what you'd pay a direct-mail company.
2. You might think that you're saving money by not advertising, but, if you don't advertise, you're actually losing money.

#5 Print & deliver placemats.

Once you've gotten all your advertisers, you're ready to have the placemats printed and delivered. You'll find that, during the process, you'll learn a lot, meet a lot of people, and (if you're alert) you'll be able to make lots of business contacts.

Before closing out this section, let's talk a little about advertising in general and specifically about the types of ads you'll want to sell. Also, you'll find that at various points throughout this manual, I'll refer back to this section, because much of what I've gone into in this section will apply to the rest of manual.

Business Card Ads.

If you don't want to be responsible for having the ads created, you have a couple of options. First, you could leave that part of it to the advertiser. In fact, some advertisers will have ads that are "camera ready" for you to use. Second, you could sell business card ads. Business card ads are those that look just like a business card and often are nothing more than a copy of the business card. Many smaller newspapers have a section of the paper that's nothing but business card ads. The advantage with them is that no typesetting or ad design is necessary, especially if the card is on white stock. If the ad is on colored stock and not easy to reproduce, some printers will be able to reproduce it with a desktop publishing system.

notes

"Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises."

—Demosthenes

*"Men who say it
cannot be done,
should not interrupt
those doing it."*

—Chinese proverb

Business card ads are usually the choice of those who want to save money. As to their effectiveness, I think they work best when they appear under a business directory section of a newspaper.

Coupons.

Coupons are a terrific way to generate business and, because they work so well, they're really easy to sell. The greatest selling point with coupons is that people redeem them and, because they do, it's also easy to track the success of advertising in this manner. One drawback to placemat advertising is that the placemats are usually tossed into the trash at the end of the meal. If the placemats have coupons on them, they're more likely to be taken home.

Overview.

Nearly every restaurant today has some type of paper placemats and I can't imagine any of them turning down an offer to supply them with placemats for absolutely nothing.

Much of what has been discussed in this section will be beneficial to the rest of this manual. Therefore, I've purposely elaborated on this section to a much greater degree than I will from here on. The concepts that follow are simple and don't require a lot of detailed explanation.

So you hate selling.

No problem. There are lots of people who would rather sell than do anything else and finding them is really simple. A small ad in the classifieds is a simple way you could use to attract potential salespeople. You could word your ad something like this: Temporary position available in advertising sales. Excellent commission. Call (your number).

Now all you need to do is be available to answer the telephone and interview the prospective salespeople. You'll need to decide what "excellent commission" means. In New York City, for example, you'll no doubt have to give a larger commission than you might in Fall River, Massachusetts. If you don't get a good response on the ad, you might want to add "possible full time." Because you hate selling, you might think everyone does, but you'll be surprised at just how many people really enjoy sales.

There is an old saying: "If you want to become wealthy, all you need to do is find a need and fill it." Providing restaurants with paper placemats is a good way to earn extra cash or to obtain your own advertising free of charge. However, there are some restaurants that use cloth placemats, thus eliminating the need for paper mats. This does not eliminate the need for menus however, and there is a lot to be said for this method of obtaining advertising.

Nearly all restaurants, (excluding, of course, fast food restaurants) need menus, and the best thing about them, from the point of a prospective advertiser, is that menus don't usually get trashed. In fact, menus get taken home and some end up in the workplace because many restaurants that provide delivery service will fax copies of their menu to local business establishments.

All of the things we discussed in the previous section apply here and there is no need to spend a lot of time in discussing the pros and cons of providing menus to restaurants. I would just like to point out that you will probably do best with restaurants that deliver, simply because most restaurants that offer delivery service provide their patrons with menus or fax menus to them. Again, as with paper placemats, I would recommend that, when you sell advertising space, you encourage the advertiser to use coupons.

"...The simple fact is that prospects will read any copy that captures and holds their interest. And, of course, they won't read copy that does not interest them, no matter how much white space you provide or how easy to read the copy appears to be."

—Herman Hotz

About calendars

The business community has been giving calendars to its customers for longer than most people can remember. Every business that you can think of has provided calendars to their patrons. Some of the more notable are drugstores, banks, florists, funeral parlors, office supply stores, grocery stores, gas stations, insurance companies, etc. The nice thing about calendars is that they hang around for a year. I can't think of another way to advertise so cheaply for such a long period of time.

Some might think that putting a calendar together would be expensive. After all, a calendar usually has one page for every month and that's a lot of printing. Not so. Calendars come in so many different sizes and types that you could probably fill a room with all the different types of calendars available.

If you're looking to save money, you might want to consider a one-page calendar showing all twelve months and with ads (or coupons) at the bottom, such as the one shown below. Again, if you solicit ads from other small business owners, you can probably have the calendars printed, complete with your ad, without spending any of your own money.

In Chapter 9 (More Ways to Get Paid for Advertising Your Business), I'll show you a monthly calendar that is unique and has the potential of being a big money-maker for you.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."

—Albert Einstein

letters

Newsletters are not only an excellent way to get free advertising, but they can also be very profitable. The most obvious question that immediately comes to mind is "What would I do a newsletter on?" It's a valid question, but the answer is simpler than you might imagine.

Writers learn early on that in order to write at their best, they need to write about what they know. The same rule applies when considering putting a newsletter together. We live in a time that some have called "the age of specialization." Doctors specialize, as do lawyers, computer programmers, television repairmen, etc. The list of people who specialize in one particular area is long and so is the list of businesses that specialize. If you're one of those people, or if your business is one that specializes in one particular area, then you have the makings of a newsletter.

Putting a newsletter together requires skills that you may not have—such as typesetting, layout and design—but it's not necessary to have those skills. All you want to do is gather the information to put the newsletter together and hire others to do the typesetting and layout and pay them from the proceeds derived from the advertisers.

Basically, what you need to do is to first determine if there is already a newsletter covering your area of specialty. If not, you then need to develop a list of potential readers. Whether your newsletter is one that will appeal to individuals or business, the process is essentially the same.

From the Yellow Pages of your local phone book, you should be able to obtain a listing of companies that are engaged in the same type of business that you are. If you wish to expand your list to include businesses in other states, you should be able to find out-of-state telephone books at either the local library or the main office of your local telephone company.

How do you get names to send your newsletter to?

There are several ways to do that. If you have funds available, you would find a "list broker" from the Yellow Pages or you might also look for marketing firms and/or mailing houses. Another way is to start by creating the newsletter and mail it to local firms that either specialize in your area of expertise or to firms that employ people with those same skills.

You can be certain your newsletter will reach the right person if you do a bit of preliminary research. For example, if you were putting a newsletter together for nurses, you might call a local hospital. Explain that you're putting a newsletter together specifically for nurses and you'd like to provide their staff with copies—free of charge—if they would provide you with a list of names. You don't need home addresses. In fact, if you were to ask for that information, you'd probably find they wouldn't give it to you. If the company or organization you're targeting won't provide a list of names, you would simply ask how many individuals employed for them would like a copy of the newsletter. With that information, you've got enough to get started.

Magazines and newsletters depend on advertising for their very existence. You'll want to solicit advertising from companies or individuals who would want to target a group such as yours. Again, using nurses as an example, you might want to solicit advertising from nursing homes, hospitals, employment agencies specializing in placing medical personnel, medical and drug supply firms, etc. The main selling point will be the circulation of your newsletter and it doesn't have to be huge. I've seen newsletters that brought in thousands of dollars in advertising annually but had a readership of less than five hundred individuals or companies. The primary reason companies advertise in newsletters is that a newsletter targets a specific audience and is, therefore, more likely to produce a return (or sales) on their investment.

notes

*"The man who wins
may have been
counted out several
times, but he didn't
hear the referee."*

—H. E. Jansen

"The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them."

—George Bernard Shaw

How do you know what to charge for an ad?

Most magazines, newspapers, and newsletters charge for the amount of space used. For example, you might charge \$200 for a full-page ad, \$150 for a half-page, and \$80 for a quarter-page. Some newsletters will also have an area for classifieds (sometimes an entire page and sometimes just a quarter or half-page, depending on the number of classifieds ads sold).

In order to determine what you'll charge for advertising, you'll need to determine how many pages the newsletter will be, how many copies you will have printed, and whatever other charges you'll incur (such as typesetting, postage, gas, and your time). Remember, if you want to bring in extra cash, you can do that with a newsletter but, if you just want to advertise your own business, you can provide space for your advertisers at extremely competitive rates. In fact, if you were to have a full-page ad for yourself, you could have your ad and the cost of the newsletter paid for by the advertisers and still provide competitive advertising rates.

What kinds of information should your newsletter have?

The type of articles you would have in your newsletter is something you'll have to decide. I can, however give you some general areas you'll want to cover:

- **Changes in technology that effect your specialty.**
- **Tips on how to do job-related tasks more efficiently.**
- **Profiles of individuals or companies that have contributed in unique ways to the profession.**
- **On-going educational opportunities for members of the profession.**
- **Job listings. Providing job listings (free of charge) to businesses or organizations seeking individuals with the skills and qualifications of your readership is an excellent way to promote the newsletter and get the word out of its existence.**

- **Book reviews, whether they relate to the specialty or not.**

Where do you get the information for your newsletter?

You can draw from your own experience or solicit articles from other individuals within your specialty. If you reprint articles from newspapers, magazines, or books, you'll want to obtain permission of the author or publisher. If your newsletter is distributed free of charge and does not produce a profit, you'll usually find that obtaining permission to reprint is not that difficult. If you want to write the articles yourself, don't overlook your local library. Remember that earlier I talked about ignoring something because it's too simple. Well, one of the reasons I keep stressing the library is because the solution to most of your information-gathering tasks is to visit the library. If you already know that, good for you ! If not, you'll certainly want to add the library to your personal map of "the road to success."

There is a good deal of work involved in putting a newsletter together. Since a newsletter is an ongoing project, this method of spreading the word (or advertising) will not be for everyone. Those who do decide to go this route, however, will find that with each new publication, the task of putting a newsletter together gets easier. A newsletter is highly effective in targeting your market—a goal every advertiser strives for but doesn't always reach.

*"Many receive
advice, only the wise
profit from it."*

—Syrus

and Bulletin Boards

*"Fear of becoming a
has-been keeps
some people from
becoming anything."
—Eric Hoffer*

Bulletin boards, bulletin boards, bulletin boards. They're everywhere. If you want to advertise—absolutely free—I can't think of a better way to do it, especially if

your target audience is everyone. There are bulletin boards in colleges and schools (private, public, technical, or trade schools), in supermarkets, in laundromats, in apartment complexes, in public buildings, at the workplace, and almost anywhere people congregate. And guess what?—EVERYONE READS BULLETIN BOARDS. Haven't you? Why not take advantage of this type of advertising medium?

If you want to promote your business and your budget is almost nothing, this could be the way to go. You've seen those bulletin board fliers—the ones with the little tear-off at the bottom. I've seen these type of fliers promoting everything from the latest diet to the kid down the street looking to cut lawns.

Distributing fliers is a fairly simple thing to do, but here are a few hints that will make it easier, and possibly attract more people to your flier.

- **A bright paper always gets attention and fluorescent paper really does the trick.**
- **Color can influence how someone feels about something and it would be worthwhile to do some reading on the psychology of color. Of course, there's an alternative—pay an advertising company a great big fee to tell you what you could have found out yourself at the library.**
- **You know the flier on the windshield routine? Doesn't it irritate you? My own observation is that it irritates most people and, besides that, it just doesn't work. I've never known anyone who had great success as result of advertising this way.**
- **When you choose the bulletin board method of advertising, you'll probably want to have some type of tear-off sheet. I've seen lots of fliers that**

don't. If someone is interested, the only one solution is to take the sheet with them. If you don't have a tear-off at the bottom, then you'll want to leave more than one flier.

- If you want your advertising to have a professional appearance, then you should have your flier prepared either by a printer, design studio, or someone with a desktop publishing system.

Electronic Bulletin Boards.

If you're one of those people with a computer at home or if you use a computer in your business, you may already know about electronic bulletin boards. If not, this will be a brief overview. To find out more, call one of the computer outlets in your area or someone you know who is computer literate. They should be able to fill you in on the details.

There are several electronic bulletin boards—America Online, Microsoft Network, and Prodigy are the most popular. An electronic bulletin board consists of a mainframe computer at a central location that allows individuals and companies to get information, various public domain software and to send electronic mail to others throughout the world.

There are fees assessed for time on the network, ranging anywhere from fifty cents per hour to over ten dollars per hour, and there are hundreds of local bulletin boards throughout the country that have no charge at all. In order to get information on local networks, you'll have to do a little research. Usually, information on local networks is spread by word of mouth. If you know anyone who works with computers, or owns a computer, you would do well to start your search with them.

Without getting into a lot of detail that would bore the computer wizard and confuse the technologically challenged, suffice it to say that electronic bulletin boards put you in contact with millions of people.

The main computer is set up in various sections. Perhaps the best way is to visualize the computer network as a mall consisting of many different stores, each one appealing to a special group. In fact, computer networks call the groups SIG (Special Information Group). These SIGs would consist of such things as owners of Macintosh computers, owners of PCs, people interested in writing, in politics, in art, and more topics than I can list here. Each SIG listed has an electronic bulletin board on which you can post messages of almost any kind. Most of the larger networks do monitor the messages. If they don't fall within the network's guidelines (for example, if the message contains profanity) it may be deleted by the network staff. While advertising is not allowed on most of the various bulletin boards within a computer network, people do advertise on them and often without having their messages deleted. In addition, most of the networks have computer classifieds where, for a small fee, you can place an ad. Though you might not think of electronic bulletin boards as a good medium for advertising your business, you'd probably be surprised to learn just how many people are using their computers to advertise that way. There is some cost involved but compared to more conventional methods of advertising and the numbers of people you reach, the cost is insignificant.

Hotels
Motels

Business
Cards

Envelopes

People who do not travel frequently sometimes think that people who do have a great life. Travel always seems exciting to those who aren't forced to do it in order to make a living. Anyone who does travel frequently knows all too well the frustration associated with staying in motel rooms, of being in a strange city every night, not knowing anyone, not knowing where to find a good restaurant, the nearest mall, or any of the familiar places we take for granted at home. Many people who travel in connection with business have a non-existent nightlife, primarily because they don't know where to go. Likewise, there are many tourists who, once they arrive at their destination, don't know where to find anything. While you may be one who plans a vacation in every detail, there are many who don't and that's where you find your advertising opportunity.

If you've done any traveling recently and stayed in a motel or hotel, chances are you may have found some literature on where to go and what to do in the area. There may even have been some coupons on the dresser, redeemable at local establishments. Are you getting the picture? Do you see the opportunity?

Whether you travel frequently or not, you can be assured that there are millions of Americans who do. Among the millions who stay in a hotel or motel in your community are potential customers for you, for presenting you with another opportunity to advertise for little or no money.

All you need to do is call the hotels or motels in your community and reach an agreement to provide **FREE INFORMATION** to their patrons. This method is essentially no different than providing placemats to restaurants. Along with your coupons, you'll want to include some history of the area and a list of "things to see and do" while in your city. This will show the hotel/motel that you're actually providing something of value, other than just coupons. You can get the information you need from your local Chamber of Commerce or, if you're a long-time resident of your city, you can probably put the information together yourself.

Again, as with placemats and menus, if you sell advertising space, you'll be able to cover your costs and provide advertising space for your own business.

Earlier in this manual, I said that business cards were a good way to advertise. I'll elaborate on that a bit more here.

Some time ago, a thought struck me that I'll share with you. The difference between an employee and a businessperson is that one gives a prospective employer a resume and the other gives a prospective customer a business card. There are several other distinctions that set the employee and the businessperson apart, but it seems to me that this is a major distinction in that it tells us something about the nature of how we perceive ourselves and how others perceive us. A tiny little card can make such a difference. In other words, some people are employees simply because they've always seen themselves as employees and will always see themselves as employees. After all, no one goes about designating "you are an employee and you are a businessperson." The distinction is one we make. If we want to change how others see us, we can often accomplish that with a little card—a business card.

That tells me a couple of things about the business card. The first thing it tells me is that a business card is a very powerful tool and, secondly, that if a business card has the power to change how others perceive us, it has the power to deliver any message we want it to. That is what advertising is all about.

You'll remember that we talked about keeping things simple and not overlooking something just because it seemed too simple. That discussion applies to business cards as much as to anything else. You might be surprised to learn how many people have business cards made and then never hand them out. Business cards can run from inexpensive to costly, but they could be your least expensive form of advertising, as long as you keep them simple.

*"Try novelties for
salesmans bait—for
novelty wins with
everyone."*

—Goethe

If you have a business and don't have business cards, get them. That is, if you want your business to succeed. If you have business cards and aren't giving them out, give them out—that is, if you want your business to thrive.

A business acquaintance once told me that he leaves business cards everywhere—he even leaves one on the table when he goes out to eat and he swears that his business is greatly enhanced by this habit. The sooner you start distributing your business card, the sooner you could see results.

Some of the places you might leave your card are restaurants, stores, bulletin boards, waiting rooms, technical (or trade) schools and colleges, hotels and motels, clubs—and, of course, you will want to give your card to anyone you perceive to be a potential customer.

Now that we've talked about business cards, let's talk about another way to advertise that would fall into the category of inexpensive —envelope advertising.

When you get your bills, particularly from department stores, doesn't the envelope have all kinds of advertising on it? There's a good reason for that. Advertisers in the know are well aware that between the time that the envelope containing your bill leaves them and gets to you, many people will have seen it. If nothing else, it implants an image in their mind. Hopefully, the image will be so strong that, when a person thinks of tools, for example, they'll think of Sears.

You can use this method of advertising. If your budget for advertising is next to nothing, you'll find that this method of advertising will cost next to nothing. The envelopes you get from department stores and direct mail companies that have all that advertising on them are usually in full color and, therefore, very expensive. However, for the business that's just starting out or has little money for advertising, all you need is to have a rubber stamp made. Every time you send out a bill, a letter, whatever—stamp the envelope. It's as simple as that. Remember, this is a long-term thing—something you'll want to do as long as you're in business. If, later on, your advertising budget grows, you might want to replace the rubber stamp with printing. Also, if you think that a rubber stamp on the envelope doesn't look all that professional, consider this: a homemade look can give the impression that it costs less to do business with you. In an economy where people have to count their pennies, that may be just the message you want to convey.

notes

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence..."

—Vincent T. Lombardi

Publicity

Machines

Signs are another form of advertising that many business owners either ignore or just don't understand. When I say they don't understand, I mean that they do not fully appreciate the power of a sign.

A sign painter once told me that a customer of his (a plumber) increased his business by \$20,000 in just one year after having a sign painted on his truck. To that businessperson, the sign on his truck was crucial, because he worked from his home and his truck was not just his way of getting around. It was, in a sense, his office.

Signs are very important to the success of any business. They're another way you can advertise on a small budget. True, signs can be pretty expensive; but there's nothing to say that a sign has to be expensive. If you follow the lead of the plumber with the sign on his truck, you can take advantage of this mode of advertising.

The sign you choose doesn't have to be expensive, nor does it have to be permanent. Let's face it, if your business transportation is also your family car, you don't want to deface it by painting a sign on it. You can get one of those magnetic signs and, when your car is ready to be traded in for a new one, you just remove the sign. The main thing to remember if you choose to advertise with a sign on the truck or car is to keep the message short. This is one instance where white space really does count. Remember, when you're driving around, people will only have a few seconds to see your message. Make it as brief as possible. Something like this:

Ann's Catering
926-7124

If you don't think you can afford to have a sign, you're fooling yourself. You can't afford not to have a sign. Once again, if you need a sign and don't have the money, you might try the barter system—your service or product in return for a sign. Remember, too, that when you're buying a sign, shop around. You'll find that prices for signs will vary dramatically.

If you just can't find a sign company or a painter who can meet your budget, you might try making your own sign. If you can't do lettering, that's okay. You can pick up lettering from hobby and craft stores and, along with a piece of metal or wood and some spray paint, you can make a sign that could prove to be very effective. The process is simple. Here's one way you can do it.

- **First, spray the metal or wood with whatever background color you want to use (an orange background implies a bargain and a red background will be easily seen). After the paint dries, draw straight lines (with a pencil) as a guide when applying the letters and then do your lettering. Make sure when you buy the letters that they're large enough. Also, be sure to ask how they'll stand up against the weather.**
- **To make a sign with reverse lettering, first paint the entire surface of the sign white and, after the paint has dried, draw your lines. Then apply your letters. Spray the entire surface of the sign with the second color (red or black would work well) and carefully remove the letters before the paint dries.**

Again, and this is very important, this is one of the times you want the message to be brief—just enough for the passing motorist to be able to read. Remember, lots of small text on a sign is usually a waste of space and money.

*"The price of
greatness is
responsibility."
—Winston Churchill*

Another way of advertising your business on a limited budget is through speaking engagements. There are all kinds of opportunities to speak to various groups on almost any topic. If you enjoy public speaking, you should consider joining Toastmasters International, an organization that helps members develop their skills as public speakers. You should be able to find a number for your local chapter in your telephone book. If not, check the reference section of your local library.

If you are one of those people whose knees knock together at the very thought of giving a speech, you might want to have another person (a family member, an employee, or perhaps a friend) do the speaking for you, as a representative of your company. Many business people ignore this avenue as a method of advertising and I think that's a mistake. Advertising is nothing more than getting the word out about your product or service and public speaking is an excellent vehicle to accomplish just that. And the really great thing about it is that it's ABSOLUTELY FREE. In fact, some organizations will even pay you to speak.

What qualifies you as a public speaker? Your knowledge of your service or product. It's as simple as that. Sharing your knowledge is another form of word-of-mouth advertising. Word-of-mouth is always free and can be the key factor in a company's success.

Another form of word-of-mouth advertising that you might want to consider falls under the general category of "publicity." In Hollywood, there is the attitude that even bad publicity is good publicity, attesting to the idea that publicity sells. One way for you to get free publicity is to get in touch with any radio stations in your area that have a "talk radio" format. You should also consider contacting your local television stations. Some television stations have local morning talk shows and are always looking for guests. If you think that your profession is one that would interest a viewing or listening audience, you should pursue this. Even if you don't think it is, you may want to pursue it anyway and let the stations decide. Lots of people don't think that what they do is very interesting, but that's just because it's become familiar to them. Because you no longer find what you do fascinating doesn't mean that others won't.

If what you do is unique or creative, you might also want to consider calling your local newspaper. You know those articles in the "family" or "home" section that talk about John Doe, a local guy who does something really unique? Did you know that if you call your local newspaper and ask to speak with a reporter or an editor for the business section, you should have very little difficulty getting through? Did you know that many of those "feel good" articles came about as a result of an individual calling the newspaper because he or she knew the value of such an article in the paper? If one can, so can many. All it takes is a couple of phone calls and a little persistence to get some publicity for your business. And it's **ABSOLUTELY FREE**.

If you don't have the time to call, no problem. You can just write up a press release. A press release is just a brief article about your business. They're usually submitted to newspapers when people are promoted or receive some type of award or special recognition. To create your own press release, just write a short article, no more than two or three paragraphs. Type "Press Release" at the top and send it to the paper. Be aware that you may have to call the paper or send the press release more than once to get it published.

"Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence."

—Robert Frost

Do you have a fax? I'll fax that right over to you. How many times have you heard that? Fax machines are second only to computers in the way they have revolutionized the way business is done in the world today. Large and small businesses alike have gotten in on the revolution, especially now that the prices of fax machines have seen a sharp decline to about one-third of what they cost only a few years ago.

How many people have thought of using them for advertising? Well, I can't really answer that question on the basis of any scientific research. I can tell you, however, that I've seen only a few instances in which a business has advertised itself with a fax machine. In most cases, they were restaurants, faxing their menus to businesses in their area.

What's the best thing about advertising this way? Well, if you already own a machine, you'll spend only the time it takes to fax the message, and, if it's a local call, you won't be spending anything. Even if you send a fax long-distance, because you're sending a lot of information very quickly, the cost is minimal.

Let's say you've gone through the phone book and you've targeted several businesses that you'd like to do business with. Instead of having several letters typed, envelopes addressed and stamped, and taken the letters to the mailbox (or post office), with a fax machine, you can complete the same task in a fraction of the time—and you won't even pay the price of postage. In addition to faxing your letters, you can then send follow-up letters via fax and get the information delivered across town or across the country in a matter of minutes.

One way to advertise via fax is to create a news letter that you fax instead of mailing. The fax would have a few interesting tidbits, along with information about your company (your company's current specials, etc.).

If you don't have a fax machine, and your budget is really strapped, you should check the 'office equipment' classified section of your local newspaper. Fax machines have gone through several changes in sophistication over the past few years that have made many of the older models available from companies who have the money to keep up with the latest technology. You just need to do some shopping around. Sales of computers and fax machines are no longer restricted to a few companies specializing in office equipment. Both can be bought from department stores and a wide variety of discount stores. Just remember, one single ad in your newspaper can cost as much as you'd pay for a fax machine (and there's no guarantee that you get results with that ad). If you spend the money to get the fax and the message you send doesn't get a response, you simply rework the message and send it again until you do get the response you wanted. And you don't have to pay another huge fee to the newspaper.

notes

*"If you would be
punagent, be brief;
for it is with words as
with sunbeams—the
more they are
condensed, the
deeper they burn."*

—Robert Southey

48

To get paid for advertising your business

notes

In some ways, this chapter might have been the first rather than the last. However, I wanted to save the best for the last. Anyway, throughout this book, I have provided you with ways to earn money while advertising, as opposed to the only alternative—spending money to advertise. Why then, since I've covered this subject throughout the rest of this book, did I write a chapter specifically devoted to how you can get paid to advertise? Simple. The various methods I've covered thus far all require a certain amount of sales skills, and knowing how some people just hate selling, I decided to save the easiest ways to earn money while advertising for the last. Some of these still require a bit of selling, but I've found that the methods are so easy that they almost sell themselves.

The first of these methods involves something that you may already be doing and having a good time while doing it: going to flea markets. A flea market is a great place to sell for the person who hates selling. All you need to do is show up and display your wares. What wares? Well, there are thousands of them—calendars, magnets, notepads, pencils and pens, clips (the kind you use to keep the rest of the potato chips fresh), letter openers, matchbooks and matchboxes, coffee mugs and all sorts of drink containers, rulers, night-lites, fly swatters, sun visors, kitchen utensils (including measuring cups, ice cube trays, jar openers, and pet food covers), business card holders and paper clip holders, decals and bumper stickers, T-shirts, license plates, key tags, doorknob hangers—the list is endless. There are hundreds of items that people use every day that can be imprinted with your advertising message and many of them are so inexpensive that you can sell them for a profit with very little effort. These items are frequently called “novelty” items and they're pretty easy to find. Just look in the Yellow Pages of your phone book under Novelties or Premium Items. You'll want to look for wholesalers and manufacturers rather than retailers. If you live in a small town and can't find a listing for wholesalers/manufacturers of novelties in your area, you should have no problem in finding plenty of listings in the phone book of the nearest large city. If you check with your library, you'll probably find that they have phone books for the larger cities in your part of the country. If not, then call the phone company (customer service) and

ask how you would obtain the Yellow Pages for the city or cities you want to check out. Some phone companies even have directories for other areas at their main office. When buying novelty advertising items, the number one rule is: don't buy from a retailer. You 'll find that the prices are too high for you to be able to resell them at a profit.

One unique way for you to get paid for advertising your own business is to apply the techniques we discussed in Chapter 3 (Placemats & Menus) to two different yet similar types of business enterprises: pizza makers and video stores. They're different in that one provides food, the other entertainment. They're similar in that they complement each other very nicely. Food has always been a part of entertainment. Movies and popcorn. Ball games and hot dogs. Art shows and wine and cheese. These two businesses have something else in common—they both have a great number of customers and you could cash in on that.

First, let's talk about video stores. As you may already know, the video rental business is highly competitive and the only video stores that last are the ones who recognize the value of advertising. Like any other business, video stores are always on the lookout for effective and cost-saving methods of advertising. You could take advantage of this by offering to print fliers for video stores in your neighborhood. In return, they're allowing you to advertise your business, as well as other businesses in your area, on the fliers. Some video stores already have fliers that they hand out with every movie rented. If they don't, it shouldn't be too difficult to point out the benefits of doing so. If they do, you can probably get them to allow you to provide the fliers by pointing out that:

- 1. It won't cost them anything. You'll pay for the fliers and all they have to do is hand them out.**
- 2. If they're not handing out fliers now, doing so will provide them with an opportunity to advertise specials, movies for sale, new movies just in, and coming attractions. They have absolutely nothing to lose and everything to gain.**

"Life affords no higher plea sure than that of surmounting difficulties, passing from one step of success to an other, forming new wishes and seeing them gratified..."

—Samuel Johnson

notes

If you investigate this idea, you should find that one or two ads at the most would pay for the fliers and your ad. Any other advertising on the fliers will put money in your pocket.

With regard to pizza shops, I can't think of a better prospect for advertising. Pizza shops are also highly competitive and they're always having specials. Again, just apply the same methods you would in providing placemats to restaurants or fliers to video stores. The really great thing about pizza and video rental stores is that you can sell each of them advertising space on the other's flier. Let's face it, on a Friday night, there must be millions of Americans eating pizza and watching videos.

The next thing I'd like to talk about is calendars. We've already talked about calendars in Chapter 4, but this is a different type of calendar and a very unique method of advertising. It also has all the ingredients of a money machine. In other words, the money you can make is limited only by your own desire. The calendar on the right is a reproduction of a calendar that was sent to me by a relative. He does desktop publishing and prepared this calendar for one of his customers. Here's how it works:

1. Find out what's going on in your community for the next three to four weeks. There are several sources available to you for this project. Among them are the local newspaper, radio and television stations, colleges and universities, Chambers of Commerce, and social clubs (VFW, Boy and Girl Scouts, YMCA, etc.).

2. Using the calendar on the preceding page, sell spaces to advertisers. You don't want the calendar to be all advertising, this calendar should be mostly a calendar of things to do. If you want to sell a lot of ads to go along with the calendar, then you should consider having coupons along with the calendar.

3. To calculate cost, you need to check with the post office regarding bulk mail. After you've done that and determined how many pieces you need to mail

In order to make a profit, You'll want to check with your printer to determine the total cost of printing. Remember—color adds expense. While color adds to the appearance of the piece, it really isn't necessary for this type of calendar. If you strongly feel you need some color, consider colored paper. You'll find it's a lot less costly.

4. Sell the ads. This should be easy. This calendar has lots of advantages over other types of advertising, but the strongest one is that people will put this calendar on their refrigerator or coffee table to remind them of upcoming events in which they have an interest.

5. Find someone to put the calendar together. Perhaps your printer or someone you know who does desktop publishing. The sample on the preceding page cost about \$35 to produce.

I think you'll have lots of fun with this one and, because this is such a unique way to advertise, it could attract others who might pay you to advertise your own business while advertising theirs.

One final thought. Don't allow others to kill your dreams. They can and they will, provided you give them the opportunity to do so.

How do other people stop you from reaching your goals? You invite them to. That's right, you invite people to stop you dead in your tracks, on the road to success. As absurd as it may sound, it's true. Why? Because for some reason that I have yet to figure out, we all seem to possess just enough insecurity in our own abilities that, when we have a really good idea, we feel we have to bounce it off another person, someone who can validate our belief that it really is a good idea. I know, I've done it myself.

Believe in yourself and in your ability to succeed. Be careful about getting others to support you in a new idea. Some will automatically tell you why your idea won't work and others will dismiss your ideas with a shrug of the

shoulders. If you're able to listen to constructive criticism without getting discouraged and if you know someone who has demonstrated to you that they really know what they're talking about, then go ahead and ask for their opinion. Just don't act on their opinion alone. Even when all the experts tell you it won't work, if in your heart you know it will, then just do it. If the Wright brothers had listened to their contemporaries, who knows how long it would have taken for the airplane to be invented. Listen to your own inner voice—it sometimes will be the only intelligent voice you'll hear.

notes

*"Have confidence
that if you have done
a little thing well, you
can do a bigger thing
well too."*

—storey



\$19.95 U.S.

© 1997 New Strategies
www.makingmoney.com